

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

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R 290532Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7015

S E C R E T BANGKOK 15272

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EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, TH

SUBJ: US-THAI DISCUSSIONS ON MILITARY REDUCTIONS

EA FOR AMBASSADOR UNGER FROM MASTERS

1. I HAVE POUCHED TO YOU AS POSSIBLE BACKGROUND FOR YOUR DISCUSSIONS IN THE DEPARTMENT A COPY OF THE INFORMAL MEMCON WHICH DENNIS DOOLIN PREPARED ON DEPUTY SECRETARY CLEMENT'S DISCUSSION WITH PRIME MINISTER THANOM. THIS DISCUSSION WAS SUMMARIZED IN BANGKOK 14495 AND REPRESENTS MOST CENT PRIVATE EXPRESSION OF PRIME MINISTER'S VIEWS ON US MILITARY PRESENCE.

2. IN EVEN POUCHED COPY DOES NOT REACH YOU, FOLLOWING IS EXTRACT FROM REPORT COVERING DISUCSSION ON THIS PARTICULAR TOPIC.

QUOTE

THANOM: ...I AGREE THAT THE PROSPECTS FOR MAP LOOK VERY GRIM, SO LEAVE BEHIND YOUR EQUIPMENT HERE AS YOU DID IN KOREA AND VIETNAM. WE HAVE HAD NO COMPARABLE FIGHTING, BUT WE GAVE YOU THE USE OF OUR BASES AND WE FOUGHT WITH YOU IN VIETNAM. YOU'RE OUT OF VIETNAM, BUT YOU ARE STILL HERE, AND MY GOVERNMENT FACES SECRET

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DOMESTIC PRESSURES FROM STUDENT DEMONSTRA-

TIONS, ETC.

SECY CLEMENTS: MR. PRIME MINISTER, YOU PUT YOUR FINGER ON THE PROBLEM VERY WELL. AS YOU SAY, IN KOREA AND VIETNAM WE FACED A DIFFERENT SITUATION. WE MAY BE ABLE TO LEAVE SOME EQUIPMENT BEHIND, BUT I CAN'T MAKE ANY COMMITMENT. WE CAN'T DO ANYTHING CONTRARY TO LAW. AS WE GO FORWARD WITH DISCUSSIONS OVER THE NEXT FEW MONTHS, WE WILL SEE IF WE CAN EVOLVE SOME WAY TO DO THIS. WE WILL DO THE BEST WE CAN BUT, AGAIN, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE FOR ME TO MAKE A COMMITMENT AT THIS TIME. IN THIS CONNECTION, WHAT FRAMEWORK DO YOU SEE FOR FURTHER REDUCTIONS OF US FORCES IN THAILAND?

THANOM: WE NEVER PUT A DEADLINE ON THIS. WE DISCUSS IT AMONG OURSELVES WITH REGARD TO US UNITS THAT ARE NOT BEING UTILIZED. WHEN REAL PEACE COMES TO THIS AREA, THE PROBLEM WILL SOLVE ITSELF (I., US TROOPS WILL NO LONGER BE NEEDED). IT DEPENDS UPON THE SITUATION AT THE TIME.

SECY CLEMENTS: (TO CHARTCHAI) I STRONGLY SUGGEST THAT YOU DISCUSS THE SUBJECT OF FURTHER US REDUCTIONS IN THAILAND WITH DR. KISSINGER. (TO THANOM) I AM VERY GLAD THAT YOU ARE PLACING NO TIME FRAME ON FURTHER REDEPLOYMENTS FROM THAILAND AS THIS WOULD AFFECT FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS WITH HANOI AND OTHER DELICATE MATTERS. I AGREE THAT ADDITIONAL US FORCES SHOULD BE WITHDRAWN, BUT IN A TIMELY MANNER AND WITH CAUTION.

THANOM: CHARTCHAI WILL DISCUSS THE (AGNEW) LIST WITH DR. KISSINGER.

SECY CLEMENTS: THAT IS GOOD; DR. KISSINGER WILL BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS THIS. I AM SURE HE WILL GIVE YOU
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IN GENERAL WHAT I HAVE TOLD YOU. WE ARE GRATEFUL TO YOU FOR YOUR HELP IN THE PAST AS WELL AS YOUR PRESENT ASSISTANCE TO US. I WELCOME THIS EXPRESSION OF YOUR VIEWS; I AM ALWAYS GLAD TO HEAR THEM. WE WILL TRY TO COOPERATE IN EVERY WAY.

THANOM: WE HAVE A GOOD US/RTG TEAM STUDING FURTHER

REDUCTIONS.

SECY CLEMENTS: TIMELY REDUCTIONS.

END QUOTE

MASTERS

SECRET

NNN

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